(b) 6548 cases for five years, 7854 cases for ten years and 35871 cases for more than ten years, which have been accepted for second appeal are pending.

(c) The Central Government has been periodically monitoring the pendency position in various courts. The steps taken for speedy disposal of pending cases, include timely filling the vacancies of judges, increasing the judge strength, grouping of cases involving common questions of law, constitution of specialized benches, organizing Lok Adalats at regular intervals, encouraging alternative modes of dispute resolution like negotiation, mediation and arbitration and setting up of special tribunals like Central Administrative Tribunals, State Administrative Tribunals, Income Tax Appellate Tribunals, Family Courts, Labour Courts etc.

Mining in Talcher and IB valley

†2825. SHRI SURENDRA LATH: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether he is aware of the wizards caused due to indiscriminate and open cast mining in Talcher and IB Valley of Orissa and damage of upper fertile crust of soil, grass, herbs and continuous water sources as a result of dumping the waste material extracted from mining;

(b) if so the efforts made by Government to protect the soil, vegetable, and environment cycle from damage and the outcome thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES (DR. DASARI NARAYAN RAO): (a) and (b) As per information available from the Ministry of Coal, extraction of coal in that open cast projects of Mahanadi Coalfields Limited is being done as per the approved plan of Ministry of coal and Environment Management Plan clearance from Ministry of Environment and Forests. The overburden extracted for coal mining is being dumped within the mining lease-hold area as per approved plan and these are technically and biologically reclaimed with sufficient afforestration to increase green cover including creation of water body for helping recharge of ground water in the mined area.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) In view of (a) and (b) above, does not arise.

Chrome Export

2826. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that India accounts for just about 1 per cent of chrome ore reserves in the world but exports 33 per cent of the global trade in chrome ore and concentrates;

(b) whether it is a fact that India has been exporting nearly 1.2 million tonnes of chrome ore and concentrate annually while our output is 3 million tonnes;

(c) if so, whether it is a fact that the exports have led to artificial escalation of domestic prices of chrome ore by 70-80 percent; and

(d) if so, the remedial action proposed in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES (DR. DASARI NARAYAN RAO): (a) to (c) As per available information, the total resource of chromite in India are roughly 2.5% of global resources. In 2003-04, Indian export of chromite was 0.75 million tonnes against a total annual production of 2.9 million tonnes. The prices of chromite have risen in the last two years but domestic prices are substantially less than the international prices. There is no shortage of supply.

(d) In view of (a) to (c) above, does not arise.

Gold and Diamond Mining

2827. SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

The number and locations of the places where gold and diamond mining is carried out in the country, both in public and private sector?